

Wildcats end senior night with big win



Louisburg seniors (from left) Cale Schneider, Alex Dunn, Matt Risenhoover, Cole Kramer, Austin Henderson and Colton Smith were honored in-between games for senior night during Thursday's doubleheader with Spring Hill at Lewis-Young Park.

Six Louisburg seniors walked onto the Lewis-Young Park field Thursday for the final time and one last chance at a win.

It was senior night and the Wildcats had already lost the doubleheader opener, 6-3, to Spring Hill and were staring at a six-game losing streak. They were not about to let it become seven.

Instead, Louisburg jumped on Spring Hill with three runs in the second and three more in the fifth to pull away for a 7-1 victory in the nightcap. The six seniors – Alex Dunn, Matt Risenhoover, Austin Henderson, Cole Kramer, Cale Schneider and Colton Smith – were able to leave their home field on a positive note.

"I feel we came out strong in the first game and we wanted to come out and compete but we had a lot on our minds," Risenhoover said. "In the second game we just came out more free and loose and a bunch of the seniors just wanted to come out and have fun."

Henderson got the fun started in the first inning when he hit a solo home run to put the Wildcats up 1-0 and from there Louisburg was able to relax offensively and followed it up with a pair of big innings.

Spring Hill tied the game in the top of the second, but the Wildcats (8-11) responded right back in the bottom of the inning. Risenhoover walked, Blake Ruder was hit by a pitch, and with two outs, the Wildcats executed a double steal to put both runners in scoring position.

It turned out to be a big play as Schneider came through with an opposite field single that scored both runs. Kramer then followed it up with an RBI double to put Louisburg up 4-1.



Louisburg senior second baseman Cale Schneider flips the ball to shortstop Matt Risenhoover as the Wildcats try for a double play Thursday against Spring Hill.

“I could feel like we were going to have a big inning,” Schneider said. “He threw me a two strike curve and I just took it to right field. It felt good to be able to come through there and help the team out.”

The Wildcats tacked on three more runs in the fifth on a pair of RBI singles from Schneider and Ruder and Henderson scored after Dalton Stone reached on an error.

Louisburg would need those runs as the Wildcats got a strong performance from Kylan Harper. Harper, who has been pitching at the junior varsity level all season, got the start thanks to injuries to Smith and Grant Harding.

Harper filled in nicely as he pitched five innings and allowed just one run on five hits.

“Kylan did a great job,” said Dunn, the team’s catcher. “For him to play junior varsity all year and then come up to varsity, it was good to see him throw strikes and only allow one run.”

Kramer then got one final opportunity to throw off the mound at Lewis-Young and he recorded two scoreless innings to go along with two strikeouts.

“It was very nice to throw those last couple innings,” Kramer said. “I have enjoyed all my time here with this program and playing out here at Lewis-Young. It will stink not being able to come back out here and play next year with these guys, but I enjoyed my last game and it was good to go out with a win and that is all I can ask for.”

Spring Hill jumped on the Wildcats in the opener with two runs in the first, but Louisburg answered right back with a run in the bottom of the inning.



Louisburg's Kylan Harper got the win for the Wildcats in the second game as he pitched five innings and gave up just one run.

Kramer walked to open the inning, stole second and then scored on a Henderson double to cut the Bronco lead to 2-1. Spring Hill added a run in the top of the second and then scored three runs in the sixth to break open a one-run game.

Henderson, Risenhoover and Schneider led the Wildcats with two hits each and Henderson had a pair of RBIs.

"It felt good to be able to get some big hits, especially that home run," Henderson said. "We didn't play as well in that first game, but that second game Kylan pitched really well for us and we were able to get the bats going a little bit."

The Wildcats will take part in the regional tournament today in Paola. Louisburg, which is the No. 4 seed, will play No. 1 Paola (15-5) at 4 p.m., at the new Paola Baseball Complex.

If the Wildcats advance, they will play the winner of Fort Scott (12-6) and Spring Hill (10-8) at 6 p.m.

“It is sad that we have played our last home game, but at the same time we are ready for regionals,” Dunn said. “We are going to do everything we can to get a win.”